

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04  
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02  
SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01 SSM-03 /080 W  
-----221114 128137 /17

R 221019Z FEB 77

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2821  
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM  
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY SANA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 1059

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR, ET, UR, US, EG  
SUBJ: EGYPTIAN CONCERN OVER ETHIOPIA

REF: A. CAIRO 873, B. CAIRO 2677

1. CHARGE HAD WIDE-RANGING DISCUSSION WITH EGYPTIAN AMB BASSIOUNY FEB 18 ON EVE OF HIS DEPARTURE FOR LOME OAU COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING. WHILE DISCUSSION COVERED VARIETY OF TOPICS, MAIN CONCERN OF BASSIOUNY WAS CLEARLY EGYPTIAN PERCEPTION THAT SOVIETS WERE GAINING GROUND IN ETHIOPIA AND THAT THE AMERICANS DID NOT SEEM TO BE DOING ANYTHING TO PREVENT IT.

2. BASSIOUNY NOTED FLURRY OF CALLS ON PMAC CHAIRMAN MENGISTU BY COMMUNIST AMBASSADORS ALL EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR ETHIOPIAN REVOLUTION FOLLOWING EVENTS OF FEB 3, AS WELL AS CONGRATULATORY MESSAGES FROM SOVIET BLOC HEADS  
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OF STATE TO MENGISTU ON BECOMING CHAIRMAN, PLUS COMINGS AND GOINGS OF A NUMBER OF BLOC DELEGATIONS AS EVIDENCE OF HOW STRONGLY USSR AND ITS ALLIES WERE ENTRENCHING THEMSELVES IN ETHIOPIA. HE THOUGHT THAT BY MAY, ASSUMING MENGISTU AND PMAC CAN HOLD OUT UNTIL THEN (HE CONSIDERS EPMG TO BE WEAK AT PRESENT AND FACED WITH WHOLE SERIES OF THREATS INCLUDING AT LEAST ONE WITHIN PMAC RANKS),

SOVIETS AND EASTERN EUROPEAN WILL BE SO STRONGLY PLACED VIS-A-VIS ETHIOPIANS THAT THERE WILL NO LONGER BE ANY DOUBT ABOUT FUTURE DIRECTION OF ETHIOPIAN POLICIES. FURTHER, IF PMAC CAN LAST UNTIL MAY (AN ARBITRARY DATE, HE ADMITTED), CHANCES WERE THAT IT WOULD THEN BEGIN TO SHOW SIGNS OF STRENGTH AGAIN.

3. BASSIOUNY WENT ON TO MAINTAIN THAT HE "DIDN'T UNDERSTAND" U.S. POLICY TOWARD ETHIOPIA WHICH SEEMED TO BE ALLOWING SOVIETS TO SECURE A DOMINANT POSITION IN ETHIOPIA. HE SEEMED TO THINK THAT WE SHOULD BE "USING OUR INFLUENCE" TO REVERSE TIDE ALTHOUGH HE WAS VERY VAGUE ON HOW WE OUGHT TO DO THAT. CHARGE WENT OVER SCHAUFELER OF LAST SUMMER WITH HIM, NOTING IN PARTICULAR THAT WE HAD NO WISH TO INTERFERE IN EPMG'S CHOICE OF HOW IT WANTS TO GOVERN ITSELF AND OUR INTEREST IN MAINTAINING A FRIENDLY WORKABLE RELATIONSHIP WITH EPMG SO LONG AS EPMG MAKES IT POSSIBLE FOR US TO DO SO.

4. BASSIOUNY CLEARLY HOWEVER THOUGHT WE OUGHT TO BE DOING MORE AND IN PROCESS REFLECTED DEEP CONCERN OVER SOVIET INROADS HERE. ASKED HOW FAR HE THOUGHT SOVIETS WERE LIKELY TO GO GIVEN THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH SOMALIA, HE THOUGHT THAT SOVIETS COULD DO RATHER WELL SO LONG AS THEY COULD DEMONSTRATE TO SOMALIS THAT WHAT THEY WERE DOING IN ETHIOPIA PRESENTED NO PARTICULAR THREAT TO SOMALIA. AT WHAT POINT SOMALIA MIGHT PERCEIVE OTHERWISE, HOWEVER, WAS DIFFICULT TO DETERMINE SINCE HE AGREED WITH CHARGE THAT WHILE IT WAS ATTRACTIVE TO THINK THAT

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COMPARABLE IDEOLOGICAL SYSTEMS MIGHT BRING ETHIOPIA AND SOMALIA CLOSER TOGETHER, THERE WAS BETTER LIKELIHOOD THAT DEEP-SEATED NATIONALISTIC FORCES WERE MORE LIKELY TO BE CONTROLLING.

5. COMMENT: BASSOUNY'S CONCERN OVER SOVIET INROADS SOUNDED VERY MUCH LIKE REPLAY OF FONMIN FAHMY'S STATEMENT OF CONCERN ON BEHALF OF PRESIDENT SADAT TO AMBASSADOR EILTS REPORTED CAIRO'S 873. WHETHER BASSIOUNY IS GETTING IT FROM FAHMY OR VICE VERSA WE DON'T KNOW, BUT SINCE BASSIOUNY MAY TURN UP IN CAIRO FOR AFRO-ARAB SUMMIT, EMBASSY CAIRO MAY HEAR IT AGAIN SOON. BASSIOUNY, INCIDENTALLY, SEES ISRAELIS UNDER EVERY BUSH AND IS PROBABLY CONVINCED THAT THE ISRAELIS HE CONTINUES SUSPECT ARE HERE (AND SO TELLS US) COME WITH OUR KNOWLEDGE AND PROMPTING NO MATTER WHAT WE TELL HIM. TIENKEN

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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